

COS 223 Worship and Sacraments
Course of Study School of Ohio
Spring 2026: April 17 – 18 & May 8 – 9 (all online)

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See syllabus on Populi for phone number

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Course Description and Outcomes

as set by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of The United Methodist Church

This course examines worship within The United Methodist Church including liturgy, sacraments, and special services. Attention will be given to the pastor's role as leader in worship.

Students will be able to:

- Articulate a theology of worship consistent with the Wesleyan tradition, including reflection on the theology and rhythm of the Christian year.
- Articulate a Wesleyan theology of the sacraments and be competent in their administration.
- Interpret theologically the rites of Christian marriage, and of Death and Resurrection, and be able to lead such services well.
- Construct a worship service, and reflect theologically on the use of hymns, media, contemporary music, and lay leadership.

Required Textbooks

Ruth C. Duck. *Worship for the Whole People of God. **Second Edition.*** Westminster John Knox, 2021. (Must be second edition).

Laurence Hull Stookey. *Let the Whole Church Say Amen.* Abingdon, 2001.

Robin Knowles Wallace. *The Christian Year: A Guide for Worship and Preaching.* Abingdon, 2011.

Reference Books and Resources

(you may already have these books from previous classes and/or Licensing School)

Gayle Carlton Felton. *By Water and the Spirit: Making Connections for Identity and Ministry.* Discipleship Resources, 2003.

Gayle Carlton Felton. *This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion.* Discipleship Resources, 2005.

Hoyt Hickman. *Worshipping with United Methodists: A Guide for Pastors and Church Leaders. Revised Edition.* Abingdon, 2007.

The United Methodist Hymnal

The United Methodist Book of Worship

Reading Assignments

By Friday, April 17:

Worship for the Whole People of God: Chapters 1 – 4

The Christian Year: Chapter 1 and Introductions to Chapters 2 (p. 33) and 3 (p. 71)

By Water and the Spirit. Full text.

Services of Christian Marriage: *Book of Worship*, pp. 115-138

Services of Death and Resurrection: *Book of Worship*, pp. 139-171

By Friday, April 24:

Worship for the Whole People of God: Chapters 6 – 8

Let the Whole Church Say Amen: Introduction, Exercises 1 – 4, Interlude B, Exercises 15 – 16, Interlude D, and Exercise 18

By Friday, May 8:

Worship for the Whole People of God: Chapters 9 – 11

This Holy Mystery. Full text.

***Students are expected to post a question or insight on the Populi online discussion board for each of the readings above by the reading due date. This is part of your class participation grade.**

Online Module Assignments

By Friday, April 24:

Watch Baptism module videos on Populi and post a question or insight on the online discussion board.

By Friday, May 8:

Watch Communion module videos on Populi and post a question or insight on the online discussion board.

***Students are expected to post a question or insight on the Populi online discussion board for each of the online video modules above by the due date. This is part of your class participation grade.**

Written Assignments and Grading

1. Theology of Worship. Due Friday, April 17 by 11:59pm. 15% of grade.

Read Chapter 1 in *Worship for the Whole People of God*. Select **one** of the theological emphases the author outlines and describe how this perspective aligns with your own theology. Also include how this particular emphasis is embodied in your own ministry context. Your paper should be 400 – 500 words.

- 2. Prayer / Collect Assignments. Due Friday, April 24 by 11:59pm. 5% of grade.**
Read *Let the Whole Church Say Amen*, exercises 3 and 4 and submit the two type-written prayers in one document. Please ensure that the prayers follow the prescribed format.
- 3. Reflection Paper. Due Friday, April 24 by 11:59pm. 10% of grade.**
Review the Services of Christian Marriage and Death & Resurrection in the *Book of Worship* as discussed in class and reflect on how you will incorporate your learnings in your ministry context. Your paper should be 400 – 500 words.
- 4. Baptism Paper. Due Friday, May 8 by 11:59pm. 20% of grade.**
Read *By Water and the Spirit*, Chapters 9 and 10 in *Worship for the Whole People of God*, and the *Book of Worship*, pp. 81-94. Write 900 – 1200 words on your understanding of baptism in light of these readings, using appropriate citations. Write as though you are submitting this to your Board of Ministry, using the question “What is the meaning and significance of baptism in the United Methodist tradition?”
- 5. Team-planned and led worship service. Due Friday, May 8 in class. 10% of grade.**
Students will be assigned to groups to plan a 15-20 minute worship experience for a holy day during the Christian year: Epiphany, Holy Thursday/Good Friday combined, Easter, Pentecost, or All Saints. Each worship experience will be presented online during our second class weekend, in liturgical year order, with time for feedback after each service. **No sermon**, but the following elements should be included using the skills of the team members: scripture, at least one original collect in the service, prayer, music, and other participatory elements.
- 6. Worship service reflection paper. Due Friday, May 15 by 11:59pm. 10% of grade.**
After the team-planned and led worship service that is presented in class the weekend of August 1 – 2, students are to write a 2-page reflection paper about that experience. The paper should include how the team selected the various worship elements, how the team determined each others’ gifts and the leadership for each element, and your overall reflection on your group process.
- 7. Communion Paper. Due Friday, May 15 by 11:59pm. 20% of grade.**
Read *This Holy Mystery*, Chapters 9 and 11 in *Worship for the Whole People of God*, and the *Book of Worship*, pp. 16-32. Write 900 – 1200 words on your understanding of communion in light of these readings, using appropriate citations. Write as though you are submitting this to your Board of Ministry, using the question “What is the meaning and significance of Holy Communion in the United Methodist tradition?”
- 8. Class Participation and Online Discussion Boards. 10% of grade.**

***Please note: Communication is key in ministry. Pastors are evaluated publicly and professionally by how well they write and speak. Learning to write well is part of your own professional development. Writing tutors are available.**

All written work should be double-spaced using a 12-point font and appropriate citations. Inclusive language for humanity is expected. Inclusive and expansive language for God is strongly encouraged and appreciated.

Calendar of Events and Due Dates

April 1—Full Populi course page opens

April 17, 2026 – 7:00 – 9:00pm First Class session (Theology of Worship; Lectionary and the Liturgical Year)

April 17, 2026 by 11:59pm – Theology of Worship Paper Due (Assignment #1 in previous section)

April 18, 2026 – 9:00 – 11:00am Second Class session (Words for Worship; Special Services; Group Service Planning Time)

April 18, 2026 – 1:00 – 3:00pm Third Class session (Services of Christian Marriage and Services of Death and Resurrection)

April 24, 2026 by 11:59pm – Collects and Reflection Paper Due (Assignments #2 & 3 in previous section)

May 8, 2026 by 11:59pm – Submit Baptism paper (Assignment #4 in previous section)

May 8, 2026 – by 7:00pm – Team planned worship services due (Assignment #5 on previous page)

May 8, 2026 – 7:00 – 9:00pm – Fourth Class session (Team planned worship services and evaluation)

May 9, 2026 – 9:00 – 11:00am – Fifth Class session via Zoom (Team planned worship services and evaluation)

May 9, 2026 – 1:00 – 3:00pm – Sixth Class Session (Review Sacraments, Wrap-up and Q&A)

May 15, 2026 by 11:59pm – Worship Service Reflection and Communion papers due (Assignments #6 & 7 on previous page)

May 15, 2026 by 11:59pm – Course closes; no more discussion boards or assignment posting available on Populi

COSSO Academic Honor Policy

The Course of Study School of Ohio requires that all material submitted by a student in fulfilling his or her academic requirements be the original work of the student.

Violations of academic honor include any action by a student indicating dishonesty or lack of integrity in academic ethics. Violations in this category include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly passing off work of another as one's own.

Cheating includes seeking, acquiring, receiving or passing on information about the content of an examination prior to its authorized release or during its administration. Cheating also includes seeking, using, giving or obtaining unauthorized assistance in any academic assignment or examination.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting as one's own work with the work of another whether published or unpublished (including the work of another student). A writer's work should be regarded as his or her own property. Any person who knowingly uses a writer's distinctive work without proper acknowledgement is guilty of plagiarism.

A student found guilty of a violation of the academic honor code, after a review of the case, may be subject to one or more of the following sanctions: (1) warning; (2) failing grade for the assignment and/or course; (3) probation; (4) suspension; (5) dismissal from the Course of Study School of Ohio. In severe or repeat cases (regardless of the sanctions) a letter will be sent to the student's District Superintendent and Board of Ordained Ministry representative.

COSSO Attendance Policy

National policy from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) states that a student is expected to attend every class session. Unexcused absences may be cause for loss of credit or dismissal from the school. A student missing 20% or more of the class sessions shall not receive credit for the class. In the event of extenuating circumstances which require the student to miss up to 20% of the synchronous course time (whether in-person or on Zoom), the student should contact both the instructor and the Director prior to the start of the class to get approval and discuss make-up work. (Extenuating circumstances include emergency situations, illness, and dire circumstances, for example. Students are to provide back-up coverage at the local church while attending COS classes.)

Students attending online are required to show their faces the entire class time in order to be considered present, unless internet bandwidth issues or emergency circumstances (e.g., a power outage) necessitate turning off one's camera or calling in to class by phone. You are expected to attend class as you would in a face-to-face classroom (e.g., not driving). During asynchronous class time, faculty may monitor time used in posting and responding to colleagues to track your participation.

CANCELLATION AND WITHDRAWAL: Student must notify the COSSO office if they will be unable to attend class for which they are registered. Although there is no penalty when withdrawing more than two weeks in advance of the beginning of a term, registration fees are nontransferable and nonrefundable and unpaid registration fees are still due if withdrawing past the registration deadline. A \$50.00 late withdrawal fee is charged for all withdrawals within two weeks of the start of a class. All tuition and housing payments are applied to a future term.

Students withdrawing after the start of a term will be assigned a grade of AW (Administrative Withdrawal) and will be responsible for the full \$300.00 tuition amount. Any annual conference scholarship applied to the student billing record becomes the student's responsibility and is due by the end of the term. Housing payment is non-refundable.

NO SHOWS: Except in cases of immediate and dire emergencies, if a student misses any class without notifying the COSSO office, tuition and housing fees are due immediately, a \$50.00 no show fee is charged, and the student will receive an "F" in the class.